



**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
Executive Office of Housing and  
Economic Development

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## **Baker-Polito Administration Announces \$3 Million MassWorks Infrastructure Award in New Bedford**

*Grant will fund Phase 2 of Union Street upgrades connecting  
waterfront and Purchase-Union Innovation districts*



**NEW BEDFORD** – January 16, 2020 – Today, Lt. Governor Karyn Polito joined New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell, Representative Antonio F. D. Cabral, Representative

Christopher Hendricks, Representative Chris Markey, Representative Paul Schmid, Representative Bill Straus and other state and local leaders to announce a \$3 million MassWorks Infrastructure Program grant for the City of New Bedford. The project will support the second phase of transportation and utility improvements to Union Street, and leverage \$1.7 million in local investment.

This project builds on a previous [MassWorks investment](#) toward infrastructure upgrades along Union Street that advanced private investment in the City's [Transformative Development Initiative \(TDI\) District](#). Phase II will resume upgrades on Union Street from the east line of Sixth Street to Orchard Street for 1,100 feet and add environmentally friendly infrastructure downtown. Utility improvements will include upgrades to water and sewer service, as well as to the existing stormwater system for improved water quality in New Bedford Harbor.

Additional streetscape enhancements include new ADA compliant sidewalks, ramps and crosswalks, consistent benches, bicycle racks and trash receptacles, as well as upgraded traffic signals and lighting to supplement existing lighting for increased safety and visibility. Today's announcement was held at the New Bedford Harbor Hotel, an example of private investment that followed the initial MassWorks infrastructure improvement project.

"MassWorks is a valuable program that maximizes return on investment for capital funding, delivering vital infrastructure repairs that improve public safety while stimulating local and private development, job growth and housing production," **said Governor Charlie Baker**. "We will continue to collaborate closely with local leaders to identify opportunities and target public resources toward the growth and wellbeing of communities across the Commonwealth."

"As former municipal leaders, Governor Baker and I know firsthand the value of flexible grant programs like MassWorks, which help communities make targeted enhancements and provide opportunities for economic development," **said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito**. "Today's award builds on a number of investments by the Commonwealth, continuing the city's Union Street enhancements and catalyzing development of commercial space and new housing in New Bedford."

"This administration recognizes the importance of reliable, modern infrastructure to the safety and success of communities of all sizes," **said Housing and Economic Development Secretary Mike Kennealy**. "We are proud of the improvements to

public safety, thousands of new jobs and housing units, and millions of square feet of new commercial space that the MassWorks program has delivered for residents, and we look forward to continuing to leverage every tool at our disposal to ensure all 351 cities and towns in Massachusetts continue to thrive.”

The project leverages \$1.76 million in local funds, and will support more than \$24 million in downtown development, including 57 units of multi-family housing, three building renovations, and nearly 22,000 square feet of retail and office space. The project site is in a Priority Development Area as designated by the Southeastern Regional Planning & Economic Development District and is consistent with the South Coast Rail Regional Policy Plan.

“Union Street is downtown New Bedford’s main street and a center of commercial activity, and over the past several years, renewing Union Street has changed the downtown landscape for the better,” **said New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell.** “Vital downtowns and accessible, functional public spaces spur business and visitor activity, and this project will serve to further accelerate the revitalization of the downtown. I am grateful to the Baker-Polito Administration for their continued support of New Bedford’s vision and to our state legislative delegation for their advocacy and commitment to revitalizing the downtown.”

“Reinvigorating downtown has been a longtime effort, taking well over 20 years to get to this point. When we first started there were just a small number of people in the room, mostly artists and musicians who truly believed downtown could once again become great. We started with the Star Store and kept building from there,” **said Senator Mark Montigny.** “We’re now at a point where we need significant infrastructure improvements to support the increasing demands on the roads, sidewalks and utilities. This is just another indication that our vision all those years ago has succeeded, and we’re excited to see these improvements in the coming months ahead.”

“The ongoing improvements being made to New Bedford’s downtown are in large part due to the transformation of Union Street. With Phase 2 of these infrastructure upgrades now underway thanks to this significant MassWorks grant, the City can expect even more economic growth and prosperity. While we may have to navigate around more construction cones in the short-term, the long-term tangible impact of these capital investments is widespread and it ultimately creates a sense of pride among New Bedford’s residents and small businesses,” **said Representative Antonio F. D. Cabral.**

“MassWorks grants are critical to the expansion of affordable housing and job creation in New Bedford and throughout the Commonwealth. These state investments in local initiatives provide opportunities that impact both local residents and the region they live and work in,” **said Representative Christopher Hendricks.**

Through this grant the City of New Bedford will be able to continue much needed upgrades to further connect the historic waterfront to the rest of the city,” **said Representative Chris Markey.** “I would like to thank Governor Baker and Lieutenant Governor Polito for their continued efforts to improve our city and the Commonwealth as a whole.

“When I was a kid, Union Street was a thriving commercial space. It is now bustling again thanks to the hard work of many in the community,” **said Representative Paul Schmid.** “The continued support of Governor Baker and Lt. Governor Polito will keep us moving forward and provide for a new wave of upgrades.”

“Planned development in the downtown area demonstrates the benefit of targeted state investment through programs such as MassWorks, and I thank the administration for its continuing support of transportation and infrastructure improvements in the region,” **said Representative Bill Straus.**

The New Bedford TDI District, which graduated from the program in 2019, was at the hub of the region’s creative innovation economy. Anchored by an array of institutions, arts and cultural amenities, and iconic businesses, the district has recently attracted several public and private investments, including the New Bedford Harbor Hotel, a community coworking space, and multiple new restaurants. In its final year in the TDI program, the New Bedford TDI Partnership worked to continue and expand marketing efforts for downtown, focus on the long-term management, programming, maintenance, and development of the block around Wings Court, and identify appropriate mid- to long-term district management structures and financing sources.

Through the 2019 MassWorks round, the Baker-Polito Administration will award more than \$72 million in MassWorks awards to a diverse mix of 36 projects in 35 communities across the Commonwealth, including nine Gateway Cities and eight communities that will receive MassWorks funding for the first time. The awards will unlock a total of \$2.3 billion in private investment and more than 4,600 new full-time jobs, along with more than 3,100 new housing units, more than a third of which are affordable, building on the Administration’s efforts to tackle the ongoing housing

shortage through complementary programs like [historic funding for affordable housing](#) and the proposed [Housing Choice legislation](#). The transformative projects funded by the 2019 awards were selected from 92 applications, totaling \$223 million in requests.

Since 2015, the Baker-Polito Administration has awarded more than \$456 million in MassWorks grants to support 219 shovel-ready projects in 141 communities. MassWorks funding has leveraged over \$9.2B in private investments and made possible the creation of more than 14,000 new housing units and tens of thousands of construction and permanent jobs.

Governor Baker signed economic development legislation in August 2018 that included substantial new funding for municipalities, including another \$250 million for MassWorks awards. The legislation built on the Baker-Polito Administration's work to partner with communities to catalyze economic development and create new opportunities for residents across the Commonwealth, including the [2016 Job Creation and Workforce Development act](#), which authorized \$1 billion to support economic development efforts across the state, including a \$500 million authorization for the MassWorks Infrastructure Program, enhanced tools and the introduction of new strategies for job-readiness efforts.

Learn more about MassWorks [here](#).

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